

JAN 23 2015

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that maintaining an
2 inmate's family and community relationships by enhancing visitor
3 services and programs and increasing the frequency and quality
4 of the visits are underutilized correctional resources that can
5 improve an inmate's behavior in the correctional facility and,
6 upon an inmate's release from a correctional facility, will help
7 to reduce recidivism. The legislature further finds that strong
8 family and community ties increase the likelihood of inmate
9 success after release and that visits should therefore be
10 encouraged.

11 The most striking feature of the literature concerning
12 inmate visitation is that there is little, if any, contrary
13 argument or evidence that the better the quality of visitation
14 throughout an inmate's incarceration, the better the effects on
15 the inmate, the inmate's family and community, and the inmate's
16 post-release adjustment. Inmates who have regular, continuing
17 visits with at least three family members show a significantly



1 lower recidivism rate when compared with those who do not have
2 such visits throughout their prison term. Inmates with no
3 visitors were six times more likely to reenter prison during the
4 first year of parole as those with three or more visitors.
5 Female inmates who have contact with their children and who
6 complete family reunification programs that reintroduce them in
7 a community-based setting have lower recidivism rates than
8 female inmates without access to their children or such
9 programs.

10 The strong positive relationship between strength of
11 family-social bonds and parole success has held up for more than
12 fifty years, across very diverse offender populations, and in
13 different locations.

14 Recently there has been a disturbing pattern within the
15 Hawaii correctional system. Weekend family visits have been
16 canceled due to lack of department of public safety personnel
17 necessary to staff visitation. These cancelations are
18 detrimental to the inmates and their family members who are
19 integral to inmate rehabilitation and recovery.

20 The purpose of this Act is to address the ongoing problem
21 of canceled visitation at Hawaii correctional facilities and to



1 ensure that continued family and community contact constitutes
2 one of the major future goals of Hawaii's correctional system by
3 establishing twelve-month pilot visitation programs at the Oahu
4 community correctional center and the Halawa correctional
5 facility.

6 SECTION 2. The department of public safety shall establish
7 a twelve-month pilot program to promote continuity of weekend
8 family visitation in all corrections division facilities by
9 hiring part-time staff, to work no more than nineteen hours per
10 week, whose primary responsibility shall be to staff weekend
11 family visits. These part-time staff members may also staff
12 inmate visitation on weekdays; provided that no staff person
13 shall work more than nineteen hours per week.

14 SECTION 3. The department of public safety shall establish
15 a twelve-month pilot program to promote weekday family
16 visitation in the Oahu community correctional center and the
17 Halawa correctional facility. The director of public safety
18 shall provide for weekday visits in both facilities from
19 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. each week on any Tuesday, Wednesday, or
20 Thursday. The department of public safety shall hire part-time
21 staff, to work no more than nineteen hours per week, whose



1 responsibility shall be to staff weekday family visits. These
2 part-time staff members may also staff inmate visitation on
3 weekends; provided that no staff person shall work more than
4 nineteen hours per week. The director of public safety may
5 conduct weekday family visitation at other correctional
6 facilities as the director deems appropriate.

7 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
9 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2015-2016 and
10 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
11 year 2016-2017 for the purposes of this Act.

12 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
13 of public safety for the purposes of this Act.

14 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2016;
15 provided that section 4 shall take effect on July 1, 2015.

16 INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 566

Report Title:

Inmate Visitation; Appropriation; Department of Public Safety

Description:

Appropriates funds to the department of public safety for the creation of two pilot programs designed to promote inmate visitation at state correctional facilities.

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